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REF: JCS 919757, DTG 301544/Z SEP 52. THIS MSG IN 4 PARTS.
PART 1. This is preliminary report of an incident. Elaborations and/or corrections will follow as necessary. Unless contradicted by later messages, info herein is firm.
PART 2. RB-45, 91st Strategic Recon Sqdn, ESC by 16 F-86's on photo mission, attacked by MIG-15 a/c over international waters off west coast North Korea. Ensuing defensive action resulted in confirmed destruction one MIG-15 by F-86 escort. Specific details follow:

(a) Purpose of mission: To obtain off-shore photo west coast North Korean airfields.
(b) Special equipment and armament aboard: F-86's: standard combat guns hot; RB-45: K-30 camera, 100 inch cone.
(c) Flight plan in UMT coord. dept. K-14 to XB345716 to XD 345945, Target run XD 345945 to approx WD 456945, to XB 345716 thence to Yokota via K-14 and K-18. Briefed altitude: 30,000 feet. EST consisted of total 16 F-86 type a/c; 8 in outer escort, 8 in close escort. Close escort accompanied from start; outer escort joined after 15 minute later departure. Crews briefed specifically to observe international 3-mile off-shore limit. Flight a repetition of previous ones of like nature for surveillance North Korean airfields. preparations in conformity with pertinent SOPs.
(d) Time of attack: ~~220409~~Z 0410Z
(e) Place of attack based on pilot reports: over international waters approximately 3845N/12440E. Radar confirmation, ~~if any, will follow~~.
(f) Damage to friendly aircraft: None reported.
(g) Enemy losses: One (1) MIG-15 aircraft.
(h) Resume of action: Outer escort jumped by 16 MIG-15s, of which two (2) delivered firing passes. Enemy fire not returned by F-86's in outer escort. ~~13~~ MIG-15s, apparently added to other 16, attacked RB-45. F-86 a/c of close escort returned fire, destroying one (1) MIG-15, which withdrew smoking. Pilot parachuted vicinity 3906N/12512E. Actual number of MIGs unconfirmed; firm figure will be forwarded later. Present estimates are 29; duplication may be factor. No attempt made by our forces to prolong engagement. RB-45 returned to K-14. Two F-86's reportedly used emergency strip Paengnyong-Do Island.
(i) Action taken regarding incident passed to Air Attache, US Embassy, Tokyo, Japan, briefed for transmittal pertinent details to US Ambassador CINCFE Info. DCS/O, FEC, briefed in detail. Security restrictions have been imposed.

DECLASSIFIED E.O. 12065, Sec. 3-402 By ..... NNB, Date 5/15/80

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(j) Details of interest to Dept of State: Preliminary reports indicate unprovoked enemy attack our a/c over international waters. Return fire considered last resort to protect RB-45. No attempt our forces ~~XXXXXX~~ to precipitate or prolong action. MIG destroyed by retaliatory fire our fighters. Recon flight off-shore surveillance GF type authorized by REFHMSG. No intent or purpose to violate 3-mile off-shore limit. Crews specifically briefed to avoid overflights of North Korea and territorial waters within three-mile limit.

PART 3. It is the intention of this hqs, unless otherwise directed, to remain rigidly silent on incident. If any communist outcry, to retort that defensive fire was necessary to forestall enemy destruction our a/c by unprovoked attack over international waters. Regret necessity of having to preserve our a/c by destroying of theirs. Further, will deny culpability if allegations are made of our penetrating 3-mile off-shore limit or other hostile gesture. In event of security leak necessitating statement, its context will follow above intention.

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PART 4. Will forward immediately additional information of interest to USAF.

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